

# Selecting Strategies and Approaches that Prevent Violence

A public health approach uses data to make decisions and set priorities. Before beginning this process, it is important to have a good understanding of the needs, resources, and capacity of your community. See the [Planning Section](#) on the Violence Prevention in Practice Site for more information. It is also important to identify the key stakeholders that should participate in this process. Decisions outlined in this worksheet could be made by a group that represents the various sectors and communities affected by the violence prevention plan. See the [Partnership Section](#) on the Violence Prevention in Practice Site for information about potential key stakeholders.

Organized into four steps, this worksheet can be used to facilitate a group discussion.

**Step 1. Prioritize Risk and Protective Factors for Violence**

**Step 2. Select a Mix of Strategies**

**Step 3. Identify a Set of Approaches**

**Step 4. Choose and Adapt Policies, Practices, and Programs**

For more information on [Selecting Strategies and Approaches](#), see the Violence Prevention in Practice site.

## Step 1. Identify and Prioritize Risk and Protective Factors for Violence

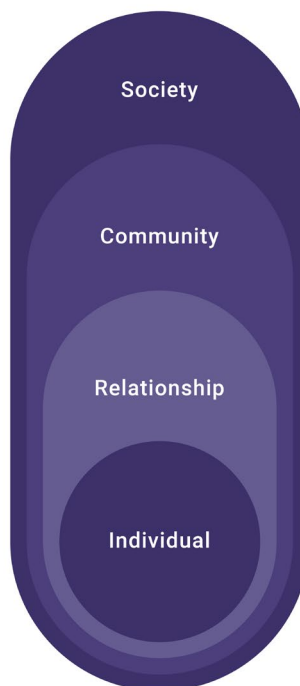
Risk factors are conditions that make violence more likely, while protective factors reduce the likelihood of violence and buffer against risk. Risk and protective factors interact to determine the likelihood of violence and can provide valuable information for planning and evaluation. To account for this, your community's violence prevention plan should address several factors at once, in a coordinated way. The data from your needs and resources assessments can identify specific risk and protective factors in your community (see [Planning Section](#)).

This diagram provides examples of risk and protective factors associated with multiple forms of violence (see [Connecting the Dots](#) training on VetoViolence for more information).

The [Technical Packages](#) provide information on additional risk and protective factors for specific types of violence at the various levels of the social-ecological model.

- Identify risk and protective factors that have the greatest potential to reduce violence.
- Check that you have identified risk and protective factors across several levels of the social-ecological model. Then proceed to the list of discussion questions.

Levels of the Social-Ecological Model



### Risk Factors

- Cultural norms that support aggression toward others
- Media violence
- Societal income inequity
- Weak health, educational, economic, and social policies and laws
- Harmful norms around masculinity and femininity
- Neighborhood poverty
- High alcohol outlet density
- Community violence
- Diminished economic opportunities or high unemployment rates
- Poor neighborhood support and cohesion
- Social isolation and lack of social support
- Poor parent-child relationships
- Family conflict
- Economic stress
- Association with delinquent peers
- Gang involvement
- Low educational achievement
- Lack of non-violent social problem-solving skills
- Poor behavioral control or impulsivity
- History of violent victimization
- Witnessing violence
- Psychological or mental health problems
- Substance use

### Protective Factors

- Access to mental health and substance abuse services
- Coordination of resources and services among community
- Community connectedness
- Connection or commitment to school
- Family support and connectedness
- Connection to a caring adult
- Association with pro-social peers
- Skills in solving problems without violence

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Based on your group's discussion:

- Use Table 1 to list the priority risk and protective factors you will address over the next 3 to 5 years.
- Choose a mix of risk and protective factors that cover several levels of the social-ecological model.
- Using the guiding questions, rate the importance and feasibility of addressing each risk and protective factor.
- Use the information from your assessments to help answer the questions in Table 2 for each risk or protective factor. This will help you rate each factor and identify the high priority factors on which to focus.
- Refer back to your **Shared Vision** to help guide the discussion.

Guiding Questions
How much does this factor contribute to violence in your community?
To what degree does it protect against violence? Is this factor relevant?
How important is this factor to the community?
Is this factor associated with other pressing problems in the community?
Are you, the community, and your key partners able to affect this factor, given the available resources, your group's capacity, community readiness, and timeframe?

The importance rating should indicate the significance of this outcome in preparing the state or community to help facilitate the prevention of violence. The feasibility rating relates to the ease with which this change can be made and the organizational capacity to support it. Consider the importance and feasibility ratings in combination to determine the priority rating.

Table 1. Identified Risk and Protective Factors				
Risk or Protective Factor	Importance 1 = Low 2 = Medium 3 = High	Feasibility 1 = Low 2 = Medium 3 = High	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Medium 3 = High	
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				



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**Table 2. Risk or Protective Factor Features**

<b>Factor</b>	
<b>Population(s) affected</b>	
<b>Seriousness/urgency</b>	
<b>Available data sources</b>	
<b>Likelihood of success given resources</b>	
<b>Current efforts in place to address</b>	
<b>Consequences if not addressed</b>	

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## Step 2. Select a Mix of Strategies

Strategies lay out the direction or actions to achieve the goal of preventing violence. Approaches are the routes to get there, the specific ways of advancing a given strategy. Approaches are more specific and actionable than strategies.

For more on the strategies and approaches mentioned in this guide, refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's **Technical Packages**. These are a set of resources on [child abuse and neglect](#), [intimate partner violence](#), [sexual violence](#), [suicide](#), and [youth violence](#). Each technical package includes strategies, specific approaches to advance each strategy, and evidence supporting each approach.

In Table 3, write in the left column the risk and protective factors your group agreed were priorities. Review the list of strategies in the technical packages. Selecting strategies that address the priority factors is key to producing real and lasting change. In addition, consider strategies that address multiple forms of violence.

Based on your group's discussion of the guiding questions, place a star (\*) next to the strategies that best address the priority factors. Some strategies may address multiple factors.

Guiding Questions
How will this strategy address one or more of the priority factors for violence?
How does this strategy align with others you have in place?
Does this strategy enhance or reinforce existing activities?
Does this strategy build on community assets and strengths?
Is there strong community support for this strategy?
Is this strategy culturally relevant for this population?
Is this strategy appropriate for the community?

**Table 3. Potential Strategies**

Priority Risk and Protective Factors	Strategies

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## Step 3. Identify a Set of Approaches

Communities can pursue a mix of approaches to advance a particular set of strategies. For more on the approaches, policies, practices, and programs mentioned in this guide, refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's **Technical Packages**. These are a set of resources on [child abuse and neglect](#), [intimate partner violence](#), [sexual violence](#), [suicide](#), and [youth violence](#). Each technical package includes specific approaches and evidence supporting each one.

Guiding Questions
<p>What evidence suggests these approaches are a good fit for the specific needs of the communities you are working with?</p> <p>Are you, the community, and your partners able to implement and sustain these approaches in conjunction with the others you are pursuing?</p> <p>What aspects of the underlying context could affect the results?</p> <p>What barriers could arise and how might you overcome them?</p>

Identify a set of approaches that work together to advance the strategies you selected in Step 2. In the left column of Table 4, list the strategies your group selected. Review the technical package to fill in the related approaches in the right column.

For each strategy, consider which approaches are most likely to advance the strategy, based on the guiding questions. Make sure you consider approaches that seem complementary, especially if they are associated with different strategies.

**Table 4. Potential Approaches**

Strategy	Approaches that Advance the Strategy

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## Step 4. Select Policies, Practices, and Programs

The next step is to identify the specific policies, practices or programs that fit local contexts, characteristics, and resources. In addition, you want to ensure the policies, practices and programs selected are supported by evidence. For more on the specific policies, practices, and programs listed as examples in the **Technical Packages**, look for **Approach Summaries** at the Veto Violence website.

In the left column of Table 5, list the approaches that your group selected. Review that technical package and other sources to identify potential policies, practices or programs that fit within this approach.

### Guiding Questions

What evidence suggests that this policy, practice, or program is effective and likely to advance one or more of your approaches and strategies?

Is this policy, practice, or program relevant and a good fit for your community and context?

Does this policy, practice, or program add to or reinforce your other approaches and strategies? Think about practical considerations, such as the cost of implementation, and the structure and culture of the implementing organizations.

What are possible barriers to full implementation, enforcement, and benefit for populations most affected by violence and other health inequities?

**Table 5. Potential Policies, Practices or Programs**

Approach	Related Policies, Practices or Program

You may need to adapt policies, practices, and programs for your specific community. For guidance on adapting policies, practices, and programs, go to the **Adaptation section** of Violence Prevention in Practice.